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NEWS RELEASE

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Saginaw Community Identifies Needs at Business Competitiveness Hearing

(LANSING) – Local community business leaders and individuals came together last evening to testify to the Joint Committee on Business Competitiveness (JCBC) ways in which the Saginaw area can increase their business visibility and bring more high paying jobs to the area.

The ten-member JCBC, co-chaired by Senator Alan Sanborn, R-Richmond, and Rep. Clark Bisbee, R-Jackson, was established earlier this year and charged with the responsibility to develop specific legislative recommendations for improving the ability of Michigan businesses to compete with those of other states and other countries.

The report the committee will submit to Senate and House leadership in September will be predominantly comprised of the testimony and recommendations submitted by members of Michigan's business community.

Monday's meeting, the seventh of eight to be conducted across the state, drew more than 40 representatives from area businesses and the economic development community. More than 20 companies, including Consumers Energy, Dow Corning, Delphi, Michigan Sugar Company and Wright-K Technology submitted testimony and recommendations to the committee.

Prior to the hearing Senator Sanborn and guest committee member Senator Mike Goschka, R-Brant, toured General Motor's Powertrain Division Saginaw Casting Metal Operation and met with Plant Manager Rick Sutton, UAW 668 Chairman Ron Brogan, President Mike Williams, IAM Chairman Tom Schneider and other management and union representatives. The legislators then toured a portion of the "lost foam, aluminum heads" production facility before commencing the business hearing.

Senator Sanborn, who has made a point of touring businesses prior to other hearings, feels it is vitally important for committee members to meet with people involved in a broad range of businesses.

"I am grateful to the local business leaders who attended the hearing, as well as the General Motors folks who took time out of their schedule to show us their operation and how their plant functions," Sanborn said. "Their support and willingness to inform the committee has given members an overwhelming amount of information to review and prepare recommendations to the Legislature."

The final JCBC hearing is scheduled for June 9 in Monroe County.